Rural Schools

While the opinions of readers as to what is the matter with the present day school system are always of interest, especially if they set forth a new point of view, we are also anxious to hear from those districts that have blazed new trails. We would like to hear of any new way of dealing with the problem of rural education that has been put into practice and found effective.

As a compensation for the time and trouble involved, The Guide is willing to pay at its usual rates for such letters and photographs as are found available for use in this department. All letters should be clearly addressed to Editor, Rural Schools Department, Grain Growers' Guide, Winnipeg, Man.

Persons who think on a line out of the common rut are generally considered cranks and often their writing is consigned to the waste basket. I am getting used to that experience, but in spite of it over a word on the question of rural education. For some years I have had the opinion that the solution of most of the problems could be found by taking the management of country schools out of the hands of local boards absolutely. This idea will undoubtedly be unpopular and considered contrary to the general trend of government. The cry for more agricultural training is only natural in Western Canada, but when it is suggested that teaching agriculture and using the experimental farms in connection with rural schools will solve the problems found there, it strikes me as foolishness. I may be wrong, of course. The trouble in our rural schools is not that they get the wrong kind of education, but that, for the most part, they do not get educated. We find men and women who have passed through the schools with no interests outside the daily work routine, their minds no more awakened than when they started school. Many of the boys and girls have plenty of the farm while still going to school, and instead of trying to give them vocational training at a premature age, the efforts should be directed to stirring up and guiding their mental faculties to take interest in the larger world outside their normal vision. However, I do not presume to be a teacher. I would leave that to qualified experts and leave the whole business to those who are qualified, cutting out entirely the local interference of novices.

Am I right in assuming that in all God's universe there is no greater or more delicate responsibility than bringing into full bloom the human bude? Would we tolerate in any of our business undertakings the management of trained workers by those of no training? Why not bring to the conduct of rural school work the same business principles that make for success in other spheres; the young worker gathering experience, gaining promotion step by step until he attains a place in the management, for which he is qualified by experience.

To make the teaching profession of a permanent character, so that while in it a man can safely marry and settle down for a few years, the hiring and dismissal of teachers must be taken out of the hands of local boards. In order that teachers may find their level, i.e., be promoted, be transferred to more suitable school, or be turned out of the profession if not a success, the management of teachers and entire control of them must be in the hands of a board of management administrating a large number of schools. The education of children is a national as well as a local responsibility and the power to withhold the privilege should not be in the hands of men whose only interest is in keeping down taxes and subject to the whim of any local party. Hurriedly and in brief my suggestion is the creation in Saskatchewan of a provincial school board or commission of experts, to be responsible for building, equipment and operation of all rural schools and control of teachers and inspectors. This commission or board to be responsible to a convention of delegates from each school district with duly elected president and other executive officers.

I do not offer this suggestion as a sovereign quack remedy, but I ask your readers to study out how many of the disabilities of rural schools it will remove.

W. A. CODLING.

Sask.

GET OUT OF THE RUT

On reading the very interesting discussions relating to rural schools, I am pleased to learn that people are beginning to wake up at last, and a streak of sunshine is beginning to shine in, so to speak. It is high time we would begin to advocate consolidation in those school districts where convenient. I think it that the future generation has been neglected for so long. I here picture to myself a school of the same type as described by a recent writer, one that belongs to the pioneer era, when farmers reaped wheat with the scythe, etc. This is a one-roomed, one-teacher school where the wind too bad whistles in at the door through a space only one inch wide perhaps, each child trying to escape sitting in the seat opposite. The grounds being without water, consequently the pupils remain without rather than go to the nearest neighbors, which is one-half mile distant. There are only about seven pupils in attendance, not regularly at that, as some have to travel three long miles over a road where there is scarcely a track during the winter months. Consequently the children attend school only two or three days each week. Now anyone can easily see how discouraging this is for the teacher. Then again, how can a child make any progress under such circumstances? For instance, a girl of fifteen years old remaining in grade five for three years. May I ask whose fault is this? Yet there are people who uphold and maintain this kind of system in these rural communities. But we have so many different classes of people, some who fall into this rut and travel on year after year till it becomes rather natural for them to stay there. Will someone overcome this difficulty and dig them out if you can? That's the task!

A READER.

We have mislaid the sheet on which you sent your name and address. Will you please send it to us?

MUST LEARN TO READ AND WRITE

Under the heading "Our Antiquated School System," I note a very strong, interesting letter from Mr. John R. Dutton. For some time I too, have felt that the people are building up with no solid foundation. As Mr. Dutton says, we have organizations galore, experimental farms, farm newspapers, magazines, better farming trains, but what earthly use are all these if the next generation simply cannot read or write. It is hardly likely that all the children now growing up on the prairie farms will be fitted or inclined to follow the plow, but what prospect have they of being efficient as joiners if they cannot bisect an angle.

Many of us I suppose, were brought up in some older country where there was a school within a few hundred yards, and there we went unwillingly perhaps, but as a matter of course, and we are not able to realize the great injustice being done to many of the children.

As for the remedy, Mr. Dutton's pen is much better than mine and I would commend his letter to the attention of those of your readers who have not already read it. I might say, however, that in New Zealand thirty years ago, if there were four school children in a given district, the government of that country provided education for them. It was not required that a building of so many cubits in length or breadth be provided, that was of secondary importance; education was the first thing.

I am not in sympathy with those who advocate "rural education" as district from "urban education," though this would be all right in a secondary or higher school. There are many things common to both "town" and "country" life, which our children have to learn in order to become efficient citizens; and it would not be a very extraordinary thing if some of our children (provided they were taught the multiplication table up to twelve times twelve) were to become "bankers, stockbrokers or commission merchants," and to be decidedly more successful there than on a farm carrying a swill pail.

F. CONSTANTINE.

TO DEHORN THE CALF

Many years ago cattle raisers conceived the idea of protecting the weaker animals from the stronger and vicious ones by removing the points of the horns or attaching brass knobs. Towards the end of the past century the entire removal of the horns became general practice in many sections. The success of this system has left no ground to stand on for those who would prevent the operation from a humane standpoint. Careful observation and investigation have demonstrated clearly that the suffering caused by the operation on even mature animals is trivil as compared with the injury that even one mean, old cow frequently inflicts on the other members of the herd in the field, the yard and at the watering trough.

Cattle are more easily dehorned while yet calves. Caustic potash is the usual agent employed, while Gillett's lye does a satisfactory job. These agents destroy the life of the horn in its early stage, rendering the treated animal a smooth-headed beast, deprived not only of the instruments of defence, but to a large extent the inclination to bully its mates. Dehorning by potash or lye is done before the animal is ten days old or as soon as the button-like embryo can be located on the calf-poll. The hair surrounding the spot is clipped off and the parts moistened with soapy water. When using the potash in the stick form it should be wrapped in paper to protect the hand, and an exposed end moistened and rubbed gently on the buttons in turn for about five minutes or until they become sensitive and red, but not to the extent of bleeding. Don't allow the dissolved potash to run down the side of the head, or the skull may be seriously burned and permanently disfigured. If carefully done a scab soon forms, healing follows, and the spot soon becomes covered with hair from the surrounding part. With some calves the operation may be performed at four or five days of age, while in others it is necessary to defer the operation for a few days longer. If treatment has been neglected until the calf is two or three weeks old the horns may yet be killed with Gillett's lye. The preparation of the horn is the same as for caustic potash. The powder is moistened and worked into a paste which is applied and rubbed well in with a knife blade or piece of wood. It is a safe practice to apply grease or oil to the skin around the horn to protect those parts from the action of the lye, but no oil should touch the part to be treated. The calf dehorned by either potash or lye should be kept dry for three or four days following the treatment, so that the dissolved caustic will not run down and burn the skin. The calf will suffer some pain for an hour or two, but no other inconvenience is experienced. Treated calves should be tied separately so that they cannot lick each other.—J. T. L., Alta.

DRAFT HORSES FOR SHOW

Draft horses that are to be shown at the fall fairs need some extra care and attention if they are to do credit to their owners. E. H. Hughes of the Missouri College of Agriculture offers the following suggestions on fitting animals. To show at an advantage horses should be in good condition, well mannered and well groomed. Brood mares and young horses on pasture should be fed grain for some time before they are shown. The amount of grain will depend on the condition of the animal and also on the pasture. Stallions and work horses that are to be shown should be fed enough grain and hay to put them in good condition. A little grass or green feed of some kind is useful as a conditioner and as an appetizer.

Draft horses are shown at halter except in the case of draft pairs. It is good form to show mares and young horses with rope halters. Halters made from half inch rope are preferable except for foals, when halters made from three-eighths inch rope are more in keeping with the size of the animal. Draft stallions are shown with heavy bridles. Horses should be taught to stand and to lead before they are brought into the ring. Most horses show to good advantage when stretched slightly. It is advisable to exercise all horses to be shown for considerable time before the show, both at the walk and at the trot. Find a level strip of road and let the animal walk and trot back and forth over a space of 100 feet for ten or fifteen minutes each day, so that he may know what is expected of him when shown. Always stand a horse with his front feet on slightly higher ground than his hind feet.

It is important that horses be well groomed. The materials usually used for grooming are curry comb, hair brush, fibre brush, woollen cloth and damp sawdust. To get an animal's coat in good condition the comb and fibre brush, followed by the hair brush, should be used every day. After currying a woollen cloth rubbed over the coat gives the hair a gloss and also takes up any dust that may be deposited. To remove dirt from the hair, sawdust which has been thoroughly dampened should be rubbed into the hair and then brushed out with a stiff bristle brush.

The mane and tail should be combed daily. Tangled parts should first be separated wth the fingers as a comb is likely to pull out the hair. In the larger shows the manes are braided and the tails are tied and artificial flowers are usually appropriately attached. The attractiveness of an animal is often enhanced by shoeing with heavy shoes, by well oiled hoofs and by singeing the long hairs about the jaws, ears, and other places with a lighted tallow candle.

HORSE SALE DURING CALGARY WINTER FAIR

At a meeting of the directors of the Alberta Horse Breeders' Association, held on June 12, it was decided to hold, at the time of the Alberta Winter Fair, an annual association auction sale of Alberta bred horses under three years of age, pure bred or grade, the male foals one year or over to be registered. The committee reserves the right to order any animal out of the ring which in their opinion is being sacrificed. All horses and foals to be shown on the halter. The committee may also cull out any animals entered which in their opinion should be ordered to be sold last, or not permitted to be sold at an association sale. The entry fee will be $2.00 and a commission of three per cent. charged on the amount of the sale. It is hoped this will help in providing a cash market for the young stock of breeders in the same way as the Alberta Cattle Breeders' Association has been able to assist cattle breeders.

HOLSTEINS SMASH ALL RECORDS

The bull in dairy selling records for a short time and the comparative quietness of this class of stock compared with beef cattle may have deluded some into thinking that the game had been for overdone and such record prices as we saw established two or three years ago need never be looked for again. Not so. The greatest Holstein sale ever staged with the most remarkable prices ever paid for cattle of any breed has just been held at Worcester, Massachusetts. On June 7 and 8, 143 cattle consigned by 30 or more leading breeders to the National Holstein Friesian Sale Co. averaged $2,072.20. This average is unprecedented, but with it went sky-high prices for individuals. King Ormsby Jane Rag Apple, a calf five months old, by Rag Apple Korndyke 8th and out of the world's champion milk and butter cow, Ormsby Jane Segis Aaggie, consigned by Pine Grove Farms, Elma Centre, N.Y., broke all world's records for bovine flesh, selling to D. W. Field Farm Co., Montello, Mass., for $53,200. We had previously seen $27,000 paid for a half interest in a bull and less than two years ago even $20,000 paid for a calf at Chicago, but this new price puts all others far in the background. But the mother of this calf is the world's champion milk and butter cow, giving 46.33 pounds of butter and 879.6 pounds of milk in seven days, and also holds the records for 30, 60, 90 and 100 days. She is also the dam of a $20,000 calf. The sire of this new high priced calf sold publicly at $25,000 and has a son that commanded $20,000.

But in addition to this wonderful price, $16,300 was paid for the seven day world's butter-champion under 4½ years old. This was Wanderemere Belle Hengerveld, consigned by E. L. Pelletier, Detroit, Mich. This is the world's record price for females. She sold to John F Shanahan, Chas. H. & F Diehl, all of Buffalo, N.Y. Hollywood Farm, Hollywood, Wash., bought a 42 pound two-year-old, Glen Alex Queen DeKol, consigned by A. C. Hoag, New Hartford, N.Y., for $19,000, or only $300 below the record established. There were 39 animals that sold for $1,000 or over each, realizing $242,515. Of these 25 were females that averaged $2,990, and 14 bulls averaged $7,712.50. The whole lot of 23 bulls and bull calves averaged $4,911.

UNUSUAL ANGUS AVERAGE

During two days Aberdeen-Angus selling recently at Bolton and Irwin, Iowa, held by Charles Escher and Escher and Ryan, 123 head were sold for $95,285, an average of $774. This is the highest Angus average attained at a public sale in many years. There was an unusual female demand. The top was Blackcap McHenry 87th, by Baden Lad. She sold for $3,050. Another of the same sex brought $3,000. The top bull was Blackcapper of Lomond, $2,010, and the next Black Bertram E., $1,725. Angus men have good reason to feel elated over this remarkable accomplishment.

BELGIAN RELIEF FUND

Previously acknowledged	$10,819 95
"Pradie," Rosebury, Man.	5 00
Mrs. Wm. Reid, Oakner, Man.	7 00
Geo. F. Ebbers, Bismarck, Man.	10 00
Mrs. H. W. Allen, Cherriot, Sask.	20 00
Total	$10,861 95

RED CROSS FUND

Previously acknowledged	$3,495 16
Proceeds of Collection at Grain Growers' Service, held at Cherriot on May 27, Cherriot, Sask.	32 00
South Bay Farmers, South Bay, Man.	28 00
Total	$3,555 16

SERBIAN RELIEF FUND

Previously acknowledged	$208 00
George F. Ebbers, Bismarck, Man.	10 00
Total	$218 00